

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Carol C. Lam***

For Further Information, Contact:

Assistant U.S. Attorneys John Kirby (619)557-6294 or Joseph S. Smith, Jr. (619) 557-5669

For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - September 22, 2004

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced today the unsealing of an indictment charging six (6) individuals with distribution of marijuana in San Diego, North Carolina, and elsewhere. This indictment is related to two other indictments unsealed in federal court last week which charged an additional 14 individuals with distribution of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine and marijuana in San Diego, Santa Ana, Pomona, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. These three indictments were the culmination of a three-year investigation of a poly-drug trafficking network that moved large quantities of narcotics from the interior of Mexico to the Southern California area. Between September 10 and September 22, 2004, a total of 12 search warrants were executed in San Diego, Los Angeles, Bakersfield, and Victorville, California, and in North Carolina. During the course of this investigation, law enforcement agents seized approximately 34 pounds of methamphetamine, 7 pounds of heroin, over 2000 pounds of marijuana, \$200,000 in suspected drug proceeds and two firearms. Law enforcement officials estimate that the traffickers named in these indictments

were responsible for the importation and distribution of approximately 40 pounds of methamphetamine, three pounds of cocaine, 10 pounds of heroin, and 1,000 pounds of marijuana per month.

The long-term investigation of these poly-drug traffickers by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as well as the Chula Vista and Pomona Police Departments, uncovered an extensive drug-trafficking network headed by Francisco Cantabrana-Parra. According to the indictment, Cantrabrana-Parra, while residing primarily in Mexico, orchestrated the shipment of the drugs from central Mexico into the United States, and the distribution of those drugs to his clients in San Diego, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. Cash proceeds from the sales of these drugs were then smuggled back into Mexico.

Among those charged in the indictment unsealed today is Omar Huracha-Ledesma, an individual running a locally-based, drug-trafficking organization which purchased large quantities of marijuana from Cantabrana-Parra and others over the past several years. Huracha-Ledesma's organization would then use vans to transport the marijuana regularly in several-hundred pound quantities to the East Coast of the United States and other places for further distribution.

Cantabrana-Parra and several of his coconspirators are currently in Mexico. Cantabrana-Parra is also believed to have significant assets in Mexico. The United States Attorney's Office plans to seek extradition of him and the other coconspirators to the United States, as well as seize any assets owned by these individuals that were purchased with drug proceeds.

DEFENDANTS

Criminal Case No. 04 CR 2408-DMS

**Francisco Cantabrana-Parra
Omar Huracha-Ledesma
Kristian Huracha-Ledesma
Ronald Charles Reed
Juan Carlos Zerpa-Malpica
Gonzalo Vega-Huaracha**

Criminal Case No. 04 CR 2407-DMS

**Francisco Cantabrana-Parra
Camilo Cesar Contreras
Mario Carlos Sanchez
Alberto Guerra-Guzman**

**Juan Jasso-Arciniega
Alberto Contreras-Salcedo
Abraham Castaneda-Flores
Bexabet Jasso-Arciniega
Roman Contreras
Inocencio Adame-Mercado
Victor Mayorquin-Camacho
Claudia Gutierrez-Garcia
Francisco Javier Sillas
Alfredo Guzman-Salazar**

Criminal Case No. 04 CR 2410-DMS

**Juan Jasso-Arciniega
Luis Jasso-Arciniega**

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Number of Defendants: 20

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1) - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Heroin, and Marijuana

Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1) - Possession of Heroin with Intent to Distribute

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1956(h) and 1956(a)(1)(A)(i) - Conspiracy to Launder Monetary Instruments

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(1)(A)(i) - Laundering of Monetary Instruments

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 - Aiding and Abetting

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation Division
Chula Vista Police Department
Pomona Police Department

An indictment itself is not evidence that the defendants committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.